MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

Judith Basin County
Extension Office

Judith Basin County Fair Board Meeting Minutes

October 12, 2026, JB Co. Courthouse - Stanford, MT

Call to order at 5:35 pm by Fair Board President Janet Wertheimer, also present were Fair Board members Billie Jo Holzer, Don Hajenga, Chad Waltz, Brenda McCray and Sidney Stratton.

Minutes were approved by Billie Jo, and a second was given by Brenda.

No Treasurer's Report was given.

No announcements or public comments were offered.

Old Business

Music Festival:

- **Electrical Needs:** The commissioners will contact Peak Electric to discuss and coordinate electrical work needed at the arena and crow's nest.
- **Bathroom Improvements:** The condition of the existing bathrooms, increased rental activity, and lack of ADA compliance were discussed. The fairgrounds are connected to the city septic system, which should not present an obstacle if the bathrooms are rebuilt. It was proposed that bids be solicited beginning in the new year, with the goal of potentially beginning reconstruction in August 2027. The possibility of incorporating showers for rodeo and fair exhibitors was also discussed, similar to the facilities in Fergus. It was decided that Sidney will apply for the STRAND grant, with the application focused on bathroom improvements.
- **Subcommittees:** After speaking with other counties that host similar events and music festivals, Sidney proposed establishing subcommittees to oversee food and beverage vendors, bands and musical artists, and publicity and outreach. Additional community members may participate in these subcommittees as they are able and interested.
- **Event Date and Planning:** The festival is tentatively proposed for a Friday evening in August 2027. Billie Jo will review music tour schedules across Montana to identify a potential date to present at the next meeting.

Montana State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture and Montana Counties Cooperating. MSU Extension is an equal opportunity/ affirmative action provider of educational outreach.

Courthouse
P.O. Box 427
Stanford, MT 59479-0427
www.msuextension.org

Tel (406) 566-2277
ext. 104, 105
Fax (406) 566-2211
Email judithbasin@montana.edu

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Chad will also contact a connection in Great Falls to gather additional information regarding musical artists and event planning.

- **Potential Musical Artists:** Potential performers discussed included Kyle Shobe, Doug Adkins of Belt, and other local and Montana-based artists. It was noted that booking larger, more established artists will require additional advance planning and outreach. Based on recommendations from other counties, the committee will also prioritize considering artists who provide their own sound equipment to reduce the need for equipment rentals and simplify event logistics.
- **Future Meetings:** It was acknowledged that organizing the festival will require more frequent meetings during the initial planning stages. Once the first festival has been successfully organized and completed, the committee anticipates that meeting frequency may decrease in subsequent years.

Ashton Deegan new Member Update:

- Ashton has been approved and voted upon by the Commissioners. He will join us during our next meeting and will serve as the board treasurer.

New Business

Fairgrounds Use Agreement:

- ***Agreement Review:*** The updated Fairgrounds Use Agreement is attached to the meeting minutes. Board members are asked to review the document and bring any proposed changes or recommendations to the next meeting.
- **Large Events and Additional Supply Costs:** One proposed revision involves the "Large Events and Additional Supply Costs" section on page 2. It was discussed that events exceeding 250 attendees per day would be responsible for purchasing any additional bathroom paper products and garbage bags needed during their rental. A limited supply of these items will be provided on the first day of the rental; however, the renter will be responsible for purchasing any additional supplies needed throughout the event.

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- **Rental Fees:** Due to the increasing number of fairgrounds rentals, the commissioners have requested that the Fair Board establish rental fees for certain events. The County Fair and Stampede Rodeo will remain exempt from rental fees, as they are county events. The Board will discuss establishing rental fees for other events, including weddings, high school rodeos, and events not associated with county 4-H or other county activities. The Board will also consider whether to implement a rental fee in addition to the existing $100 cleaning deposit or eliminate the cleaning deposit and charge a rental fee instead.
- **Rental Fee Research:** Billie Jo offered to contact other counties to gather information on their fairgrounds rental rates and fee structures and present the findings at the next meeting.
- The fairgrounds are also always locked from now on. The Extension office has the code for the gates, and it will be given to those who rent the space or are using the fairgrounds for riding or 4-H practices. There is also now a lock box on the food booth door that has the key to the food booth – again the User will get this code when renting the food booth. The keys to the bathrooms are in the food booth as well to reduce the need for Sidney or Rebecca to coordinate key pick-up or to unlock the facilities. Sidney will purchase a laminator to create contact signs to access the fairgrounds during and after hours.

Next Year's Sale Committee:

- Things to be thinking about for next year's sale-
    - **Dumpster Rentals:** A board member will need to take over coordinating dumpster orders with Republic Trash Services for the summer rental season. Sidney has the contact information for the representative Dawnita previously worked with.
    - **Fair Animal Butchers and Load-Out Coordination:** A board member will need to coordinate with butchers for fair animals and arrange load-out and pickup times. Once animal tags are submitted in early spring, Sidney will provide the animal numbers to the

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person responsible for coordinating this process. This responsibility will also include managing "extra animal" slips for additional market animals that are not sold at the County Fair but are instead sold privately to other buyers.

- **Resale Animals:** A board member will need to coordinate the resale animal process. This includes communicating with businesses interested in purchasing and reselling an animal, as well as securing a buyer for the resale animal. **A buyer must be secured for the resale animal before accepting resale requests from businesses.** Since Ashton will be taking over as treasurer, it was suggested that he may also assume responsibility for coordinating resale animals.

Term Renewals:

- Janet is up for renewal; her term would end in 2030. She asked to take some more time to decide and will report back to us during the next meeting.

Officer Elections:

- Given that half of the Fair Board members were not present for tonight's meeting, we will table officer elections until the next meeting. We will be looking to vote on a potential Chairperson (President) and Vice President.

Next Fair Board meeting date set for **Tuesday November 17th at 5:30 pm.**

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:32 pm by Billie Jo, 2nd by Brenda.

Minutes prepared by Sidney Stratton, Ext. Agent

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